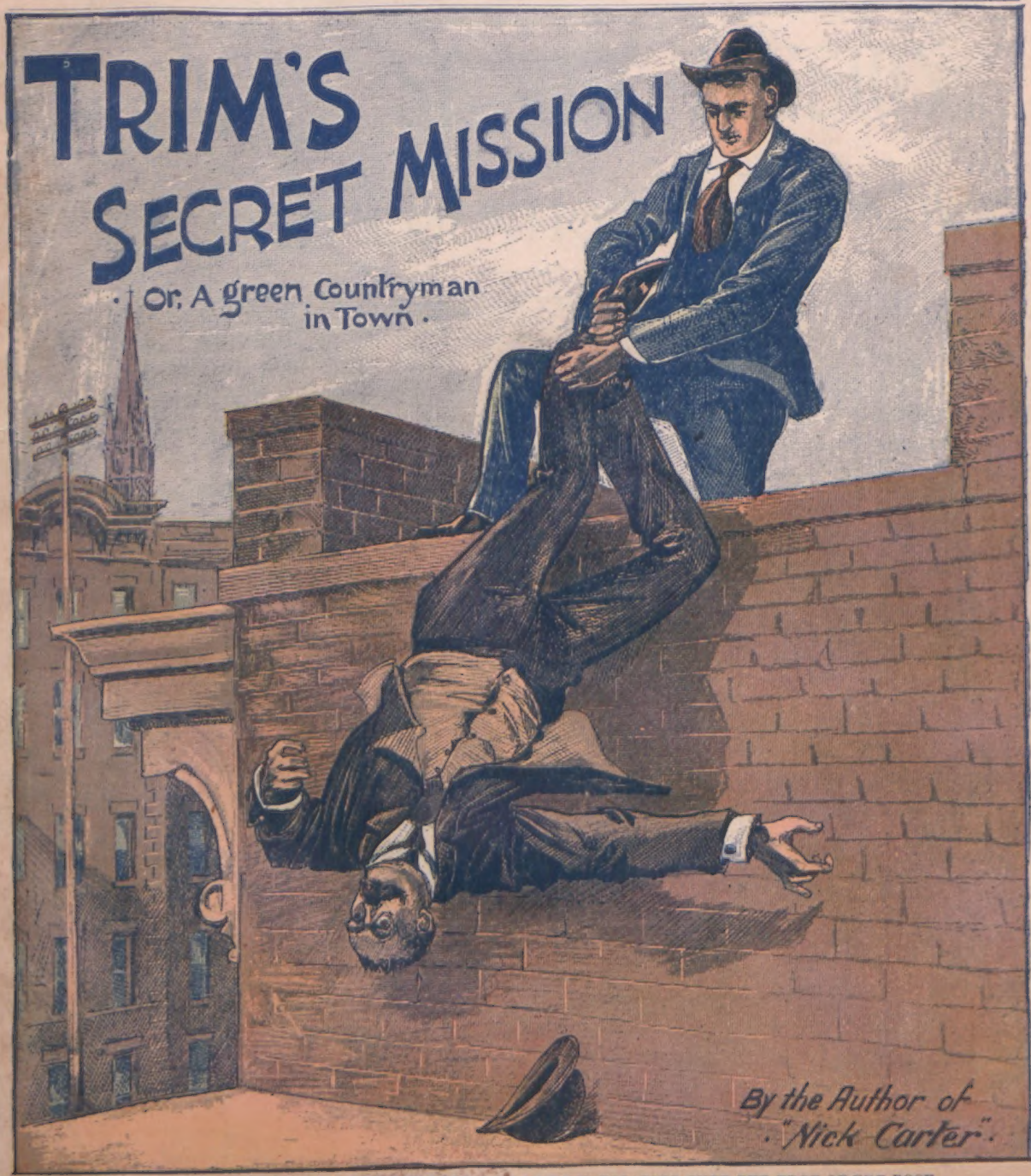
NEW NICK CARTER WEEKLY

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1897 by Street & Smith, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, Washington, D. C.
Entered as second class matter at the New York, N. Y., Post Office.
Issued weekly. Subscription price, $2.50 per year. May 1, 1897.

No. 18. STREET & SMITH, Publishers. NEW YORK. 29 Rose St., N. Y. 5 Cents.

TRIM'S SECRET MISSION

Or, A green Countryman in Town.



By the Author of "Nick Carter".

TRIM CATCHES THE CRIMINAL BY THE FEET JUST AS HE IS ESCAPING OVER THE EDGE OF THE ROOF.

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TRIM'S SECRET MISSION;

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A GREEN COUNTRYMAN IN TOWN.

By the Author of "NICK CARTER."

CHAPTER I.

THE GREAT RACE.

Sheepshead Bay; a bright afternoon in June.

A scene at the great race course.

It is the day when an event of national interest is on the programme and not less than twenty-five thousand people have gone down from New York, Brooklyn and surrounding cities to see it.

There are visitors, too, from many distant parts of the country and one can hear in the excited conversation of the crowd, the twang of the down-east Yankee and the broad musical accents of gentlemen who are "from Kentucky, sah."

Since noon, long trains have been arriving in rapid succession and unloading their throng of spectators.

A good many of them are women and they make the grand stand a brilliant spectacle.

The majority, however, are men who until the race is called, do their best to find standing room in the immense betting ring where the hundred or more bookmakers are shouting the odds and taking in the money of those who are determined to try for a profit out of the day's sport.

There are six races on the programme and there is plenty of money up on every one.

Each race will result in fortunes changing hands, but interest centres upon the fifth event.

In the conversation heard all over the betting ring and on the grand stand and out among the stables there is little else than expressions of opinions as to the result in the fifth race.

It is as if the entire crowd had come down to see this race without a thought of the others, and why not?

Who has not heard of the Treadwell Plate?

Here is a race that excites horse lovers every year!

To win it means fame for the horse and fortune for the owner!

Like the Suburban, Brooklyn Handicap and Futurity, it is talked about and looked fowrard to all through the winter and spring.

In fact, one might almost say that no sooner has one race for the Treadwell Plate been run, than people immediately begin to think of the next one, a year away.

It is not only an important event as a contest between already famous horses, but it is a long steeple chase.

A form of race that is unusually fascinating to the vast majority of the spectators.

More than that it is the only steeple chase on the day's programme, the other events being running races for various distances upon the regular track of the course.

Out of the twenty or more entries for the Treadwell Plate, there have been since mid-winter only two favorites.

One of these is O'Brien's Starlight.

This horse has a long record of successes and many a time it has brought good stakes to the pockets of its backer, even when there was a splendid "field" against him.

He is by no means an aged horse, for he began his triumphs early; but there are those who begin to feel that Starlight has had his day and that the time has come, as it must come to every great racer, when he will be beaten.

Comparatively speaking there are few who hold to this theory.

Most of the public are faithful to Starlight and have placed their money upon him freely.

The others are quietly taking their chances on Mr. Loehring's Reno.

Here too is a noble animal who has a good record of victories behind him.

He is younger than Starlight and is new to this part of the country.

People who have seen him exercising during the past two weeks are more than satisfied that he has a good chance of winning, so while Starlight continues to be the popular favorite, Ren- has a plenty of shrewd and confident backers.

There are enough of them to make the betting lively and keep the odds down to a point that gives greater and greater interest to the result.

The other horses entered have their backers too, but they are few in number and are made up mainly of those men, and women too for that matter, who make a practice of taking long chances.

As the time for the race approaches the style of betting changes somewhat.

So great is the feeling that Sunlight must win, that most of the backers of other horses are anxious to hedge their bets by taking a chance on the favorite.

This feeling at last compels the bookmakers to lump most of the horses in the "field" against Starlight or Reno, for Reno still has his crowd of stubborn friends.

The fourth race has been run and the big "field" entered for the fifth is now cantering this way and that upon the course in preparation for the big event of the day.

The excitement grows wilder in the betting ring and messengers are kept flying between the grand stand and the bookmakers.

Some men still doubtful of their judgment push their way from the betting ring to the rail and watch the steeple chasers as they canter past.

They then return to the ring for the purpose of changing their bets or for laying still more money upon the horse they have picked as a winner.

One such man is turning away from the rail when he is approached by another who says:

"Well, Mr. O'Brien, what do you think?"

"Everything seems to be all right up to date," is the quiet reply.

"Is Starlight in good condition?" asks the first.

"Never better."

"I see that Matthews is going to ride him."

"Yes, and Matthews is all right too."

"Then you think——"

"What's the use of asking me what I think? My money is up on Starlight and I intend to keep it there.

"I have taken every pains possible to see that the horse has a fair chance.

"If anything crooked happens you can be dead certain that somebody will have to suffer for it."

O'Brien looks very savage as he said this.

He raises his voice a bit and is plainly heard by many in the throng that stand about him.

Most of them recognize him as the owner of the famous horse and his suggestion that there might be something crooked in the race makes many of them uneasy.

"O'Brien is as straight a man as ever entered a horse in a race," remarks one to his neighbor.

"What does he mean by saying something about crooked work?"

"There is nothing wrong with O'Brien," is the response, "but something must have happened to make him suspect a trick."

"I don't see what trick there could be if the horse and jockey are all right now?"

"Nor I either, I'm going to keep my money on Starlight."

"So am I, though I have a good mind to hedge a little on Reno."

"Don't you do it."

"What's the harm in hedging?"

"Oh, well if you haven't got the sand to back your opinion——"

So the conversation continues and thousands of others are talking in the same way all about the course.

The bell over the judge's stand rings the signal for the horses to gather at the starting post in the betting ring.

The excitement increases as those who have waited until the last moment before making a decision hasten to place their money.

The grand stand is bustling with those who are returning from the ring to their seats where they may watch the race.

Messengers are flying faster than ever.

The word "Starlight" is repeated and echoed from lip to lip while only occasionally does one hear anything of Reno or the "field."

To the delight of the spectators the starting post for this event is within easy view of the grand stand.

They do not need their glasses to distinguish the horses or observe the jockeys.

The horses quickly approach in a body.

Caldwell drops his flag.

The assistant starter far up the course trails his own flag in the dust and hastens to get out of the way.

The people on the grand stand shout approvingly as the twenty steeple chasers cross the line.

"The race will be run on its merits," say others.

"Starlight! Starlight!"

"Reno!" come in hoarse cries from various parts of the stand.

These cries are due to mad excitement for neither of the favorites appears in the front of the bunch.

As the horses gallop away hundreds of spyglasses are turned upon them.

The ambitious jockeys are seen forcing their mounts and forging ahead while

Matthews and the rider of Reno jog contentedly along somewhere in the rear.

"What's the matter with Matthews?" cries a man whose face is streaming with perspiration. "Is he going to pull the race?"

"Sit down, Tommy," says his companion, "you look as if you were doing all the work yourself."

"I feel as if I were," retorts Tommy, wiping his brow. "Why doesn't Matthews take the lead as he ought to?"

"He'll take the lead when the time comes," returns the other.

After the first moment of feverish excitement the crowd on the grand stand grows more quiet.

Almost all of the spectators sit down and watch the steeple chasers as they separate from the bunch and string out in a long line.

The first hurdle is taken by all without difficulty and without any change in the position of the horses.

Reno and Starlight are near the rear, and those who are watching them can see that Matthews and his colored rival are eying each other and paying no attention to the riders of other horses.

Around the course they go and one hurdle after another is taken without mishap until just as they enter the home stretch the leading horse catches his hoofs upon a fence of brushwood and stumbles, pitching his rider far over his head and falling himself in a heap immediately after.

There is a flutter of excitement upon the grand stand and again the spectators begin to rise upon their feet.

They are greatly relieved when they see the horse slowly rise to his feet and the jockey hastily crawl out of the way of those who are coming rapidly behind.

"He was a fool," is the general remark, "to have forced his horse so hard in the first half of the race. The animal couldn't stand the strain."

This judgment is doubtless correct.

The horse probably had no real chance of winning and the jockey may have forced him beyond his powers in the hope of attracting attention to him for some other and shorter race.

The rest of the steeple chasers take that hurdle without mishap, and the bunch come thundering down the turf toward the grand stand.

The race is not half over yet but the spectators all rise and cheer loudly in order to make a good showing for their favorites.

Some of the jockeys have spurred their horses so as to get them nearer to the front when they pass the grand stand.

The result is that the straggling line becomes almost a bunch at this point.

Fully a dozen are straining for the leadership with no more than a length between the foremost and the last of the bunch.

Two or three lengths behind the bunch however, come Reno and Starlight cantering side by side, their jockeys resting easy in the saddle and paying no attention apparently to the wild cries of the crowd who urge them to forge ahead and take the place in the race where they belong.

Back of these two favorites are three or four other horses who are straggling along hopelessly beaten.

It is not until the grand stand has been well passed that Matthews and the colored boy on Reno begin to show some signs of real life.

It cannot be seen that they are urging their horses but it is plain that in some way their animals are now going strong.

Both are leaning far over their necks, almost at their horses' ears.

They take a hurdle lightly and then enter upon the long straight stretch that extends from opposite the grand stand to the northern turn in the course.

The spectators have sat down again, al-

most every one feeling a fear that Starlight and Reno are not being properly handled.

They are too excited to understand the cool patience with which the skilful jockeys hold back their horses unitl the time comes for the winning effort.

Now they leap to their feet again as stride by stride they see both of the favorites overhauling the bunch ahead.

Half way up the stretch and both Reno and Starlight are in the bunch.

Only the experts with glasses can distinguish the colors of the favorite jockeys through the cloud of dust that is thrown up by the flying hoofs of the steeple chasers.

Another hurdle and the racers begin to swing around the long stretch that leads to the home stretch.

It is apparent at last that Reno and Starlight have calmly taken away the lead from the field and are now struggling neck and neck for the final spurt.

They are well in the lead and a hoarse cry goes up as the crowd becomes certain that the others are not in the race.

But which will it be, Reno or Starlight?

At last, just as they are rounding the curve into the home stretch, Starlight seems to take on sudden and extra force, for he plunges ahead and in a few seconds has a clear length between him and his most dangerous rival.

The shouting on the grand stand grows wilder and wilder.

There are cries for Reno but they are mostly drowned out by the fierce roar of exultation as the spectators believe that O'Brien's Starlight is about to add another victory to his long string of conquests.

The last hurdle is cleared, Starlight bounding on, well ahead of Reno while the "field" comes straggling after. Some of the jockeys there are probably hoping or an accident at the last moment to give them a chance to sweep past the leaders and win the prize.

All at once there is a strange break in the chorus of shouts upon the grand stand.

People start and the exultation turns to a dismal groan while above this there now rings out sharp and clear the joyous cries of those who have backed Reno.

A little way beyond the hurdle just where everything seems to be plain going, Starlight has stumbled.

He sways, staggers and comes down upon his knees, pitching his rider over his head.

In an instant Reno comes thundering up and passes by the fallen jockey.

Starlight staggers to his feet, shakes himself and canters on down the course.

Riderless, he almost overtakes Reno and then starts madly across the plain, followed by half a dozen stable hands who are trying to catch him.

The "field" comes pounding down the course, each rider taking pains not to trample poor Matthews who is lying motionless where he fell.

The race is over and the lucky ones who bet on Reno make their way to the ring to cash their tickets.

The vast majority sit stupefied at the misfortune that has overtaken their favorite and themselves, and wondering what can be the matter.

"Well, it's a clean case of bad luck," remarks the man who argued against hedging. "There never was a race fairer run and it shows that the greatest horse is not a sure winner until he has crossed under the line."

CHAPTER II.

THE MAN IN GREEN.

Up on the corner of the grand stand, where he could not be disturbed by passing messengers, sat a young man who kept his eyes to a spyglass most all the time

from the moment when the racers for the Treadwell Plate left their stables to exercise before the start.

He did not join in the conversation of those around him and expressed no opinion as to the result of the event.

No one watched it however, more carefully than he.

Like the majority in the crowd he seemed to be most interested in Starlight for he followed that horse with his glass constantly.

He had not risked a dollar on the race but he was nevertheless as much interested in it as anybody who went to Sheepshead Bay that afternoon.

This young man was Trim Carter, the detective.

He had been summoned hastily to the place by O'Brien, Starlight's owner.

O'Brien, who was a very suspicious man, had become fearful that an attempt would be made to trick him out of the race, and had hoped that Trim might be able either to prevent crooked work or detect it in case it should happen.

Trim did not take much stock in O'Brien's suspicions and plainly told the horse owner that it was really too late to summon a detective.

"I will watch the race," he said, "and if anything happens I'll do what I can to see what the trouble was, but if your horse is in good condition and your jockey is straight, I don't see but what Starlight will have to take his chances."

"That's all right," O'Brien had answered, "if the horse is still in good condition at the time of starting, I shall be sure of the result.

"He may not win but it will be a fair race."

"Then what do you expect me to do?" asked Trim.

"Take a look around," was the reply, "and then we'll have a talk about preventing any crookedness at the big race in which my Mephisto is entered a few days later."

This conversation took place at about noon, just when the bookmakers were beginning to arrive and set up their stands in the betting ring.

Trim had been summoned by telegraph.

Accordingly he had spent a part of the time previous to the beginning of the races in strolling about the course, simply keeping his eyes open for anything that might be useful to him later.

"It looks to me," he said to himself, "as if I shall have a fine afternoon's sport and with mighty little work to do for it."

He saw a good many things that interested him and that it seemed might come in handy in case he had to make an investigation.

There is no need to mention them all.

One point only is worth noting at this time because it led to one of the cleverest pieces of detective work that Trim had yet done.

Among the bookmakers was a man whose face immediately struck him as familiar.

For a moment Trim could not place it but after a little thought he saw that the bookmaker, if he wore a beard and mustache, would look exactly like a man with whom he had had some dealings in Cincinnati.

This man was Henry Warren, of the firm of Hardy & Warren, commission merchants.

Hardy had been murdered and Trim had investigated the matter with the result of exposing a good deal of crooked business, while following up a clew that had led him to suspect until near the end of the investigation, that he was tracking the murderer, when as a matter of fact the man whom he suspected was entirely innocent of the crime.

This had been brought about by the

effort of Warren and his clerk, Frank Beck, to conceal the crooked dealings of the firm.

They had given Trim a bogus clew which he had followed much more successfully than they had hoped for.

The details of this unusual case have been put on record in "Trim in Cincinnati," No. 17 New Nick Carter Library, and they need to be referred to here only for the reason that when he had finished with the Hardy murder case, Trim had made up his mind that Warren and Beck would bear watching.

He had quietly made a little investigation of their business methods, which showed that their commission business was for the most part a swindling scheme of which the victims were farmers.

Before he had more than begun his investigations, the business was given up and Warren and Beck disappeared.

Nobody was willing to bring suit against them and accordingly Trim was satisfied that they would not attempt their swindling operations again in Cincinnati.

Therefore he paid attention to other work.

The moment he recognized Warren as a bookmaker he said to himself that if there should be any crookedness at the Sheepshead Bay race course, he would make an effort to see whether Warren was not mixed up in it.

"Once a crook always a crook!" was Trim's thought, "and a man who was a dishonest commission merchant, is likely to be a cheat when it comes to betting."

There was, of course, nothing to show that Warren, the bookmaker, was in any way connected with O'Brien the horse owner, and Trim did not give Warren any particular thought during the great race.

As soon as Starlight stumbled and fell, Trim kept his glass leveled in that direction, paying no attention to the result of the race.

The steeple chasers in the field kicked up such a cloud of dust as they came down the home stretch that he could not distinguish clearly where the jockey, Matthews, lay for a moment.

When the dust cleared away he saw a number of race-track employees and other persons running to the jockey's assistance.

He also saw O'Brien hurrying with a few friends from the betting ring across the track to the same spot.

Half a dozen men coming from different directions, came up to Matthews at just about the same time.

At that instant the cloud of dust cleared sufficiently for Trim to see them.

Just then a clumsy man standing beside Trim joggled his elbow so that his glass was disturbed, and more than that, the man lost his balance and clutched at Trim's arm for support.

The result was that the glass fell.

"Confound it!" thought Trim as he picked the glass up, "if this clumsy idiot could have waited a half second longer I should have been able to see that face more clearly.

"There are so many men around Matthews now that I might as well put up the glass and go out there myself."

Accordingly he put the glass in its case, slung it over his shoulder and made his way from the grand stand to the open field within the race track.

By the time he had crossed the fence, Matthews had been lifted up by several men who were carrying him to his quarters in the stables.

O'Brien with set lips and stern face was walking beside them.

He glanced at Trim as much as to say, "I told you so," but gave him no other sign of recognition.

Trim did not return the glance at all.

He was too much interested in the men who were carrying Matthews.

Among them was one who looked like an ordinary stable hand and yet whom he recognized as Frank Beck, formerly Warren's clerk.

It was his face that he had just begun to study when the clumsy man on the grand stand disturbed his glass.

Beck was apparently the most anxious man among those who were carrying Matthews along.

The jockey was unconscious and the general opinion was that he had been killed by the accident.

Trim knew that the unfortunate young man would get the most skilful attention and accordingly stood still and allowed the little procession to pass him.

O'Brien turned back and seemed about to address Trim.

"Go on," said Trim in a low tone, "I'll see you latter."

"You needn't try to make me think this was all accident," muttered O'Brien as he wheeled about and rejoined the little crowd that was accompanying Matthews.

"No, I don't think it was accident," thought Trim, "but I should be glad if anybody would give me a pointer as to how it happened, just the same."

Two or three men were lingering about the spot where Starlight had stumbled.

Trim went slowly up to them.

"It's tough luck," said one discontentedly, "he had the race won."

"It shows," remarked another, "that the horse was ridden beyond his strength.

"You can see that there's nothing here that he could have stumbled against."

"That's so," was the reply, "the course is smooth enough at this point for any horse.

"Starlight was simply played out!"

The men turned away and went back to the betting ring.

"Well," said Trim to himself, "for a horse that was played out, Starlight made a pretty good run of it after he got on his feet again."

He looked over the ground that the racers had passed and saw that there was no stump or post or broken turf or anything else that could have caused a thoroughbred like Starlight to stumble.

At this point the turf was beaten as smooth as a well-kept lawn.

Away from the course itself, however, the big field was covered with rather high grass.

No attention had been paid to keeping the grass cropped close excepting along the line of the racers.

In some spots there were little bushes and in others the grass grew in thick clumps.

Trim was looking around while trying to see some explanation for Starlight's fall, when he suddenly turned about and looked toward the stables.

The little crowd carrying Matthews was just then crossing the race track.

"Well, well," said Trim to himself, "I hadn't thought of that before.

"Jockeys are dressed in all sorts of colors and so it doesn't seem strange to find other people at a race track dressed queerly, but when you come to think of it, green isn't a very ordinary color for a stable hand to wear."

He took his glass from its case and pointed it toward the men who were carrying Matthews.

"That's right," he muttered, "Beck has a green suit on. It's dirty, but it's green just the same.

"Now then, let's see if that doesn't lead to something."

He shut up his glass again and looked at the grass along the sides of the course.

"The grass," he thought, "isn't exactly the same shade of green as that worn by Beck, but a man with clothes of that color could lie down in the grass and

stand a very good chance of not being seen.

"If I should lie down here now with my gray suit on, it's quite likely that the difference in color would be noticed at some little distance.

"A man in a green suit wouldn't be noticed.

"Everybody was looking at the horses, nobody would be thinking of examining the grass over this big field, and a dozen men dresed in green might have lain where it is growing thickly and not have been noticed.

"We'll have to see about that."

He did not like the thought of making an investigation in the presence of so many thousand spectators, but he reasoned thaat nobody would be likely to pay any attention to him.

They would all be discussing the recent race or making their bets for the next one, so he walked slowly around the spot where Starlight had fallen, keeping his eyes mainly upon the grass that grew thickly beside the course.

Presently he came to a clump of grass that grew considerably higher than that just about it.

The soil was probably richer at just that spot.

He was greatly satisfied when he saw that in the very centre of that clump the grass was disturbed.

There was a long broad mark across it which indicated clearly to him that a man had lain there.

"The fellow that left his mark there," thought Trim, "might be anywhere from five to six feet tall, so that it would be useless to take measurements of it.

"The mark is not distinct enough to be used for identifying the rascal, but I begin to see now how the job could have been done."

He went over and stood on the spot where the grass was bent down.

It was almost at the edge of the course.

A man lying there could not have touched the horses as they galloped past, but he could have done something else if he was skilful and Trim believed that he knew what had been done.

As soon as he felt that there was nothing more for him to see there he started for the stables.

Some of the employees of the track had caught Starlight and were now bringing him in.

O'Brien, of course, was anxious to see what was the matter with the horse.

Trim stood by while an examination was made.

Starlight was perspiring freely and he breathed rather hard, but that was only natural.

He seemed to be in just the condition that would be expected after a hard race.

No one could find that anything was the matter with him.

"Confound it," cried O'Brien, "I believe the horse would be in fit condition to race to-morrow. Now what has happened?"

He glanced inquiringly at Trim, but the young detective made no sign.

It was understood between them that the reason for Trim's presence there should not be made known.

O'Brien was anxious to talk with Trim but he saw that the detective was not yet ready to speak, so he ordered Starlight to be rubbed down and put in his stall.

Another of O'Brien's horses was entered for the next race and most of the stable hands were interested in making him ready, so there were only two or three near Starlight while he was being rubbed and blanketed.

Trim watched the work for a moment and then when one of the stable hands began to work at Starlight's hind legs. Trim knelt down and said:

"Let me take a look there for a minute."

"That's all right," sung out O'Brien from a little distance, "he's a veterinary surgeon. Let him do what he wants to."

Trim ran his fingers over the horse's ankles.

On one of them he felt a little swelling. It was so small that it could not be seen by the naked eye.

By the touch he could make out that this swelling was in the form of a circle that went almost around the horse's ankle.

"Now I know all about it," said Trim to himself as he stood up.

"I'd like the chance just now to examine Beck's pockets, for it's a thousand to one that I'd find a stout cord there with a knot on one end.

"I'm satisfied that Beck laid in the grass and as the leader passed him, threw the cord like a lariat so that it wound around Starlight's ankle.

"It would be just enough to make the horse trip and stumble.

"The cord would unwind immediately and Beck could coil it up and put it in his pocket.

"The jockeys in their excitement about the race would not have noticed him lying in the grass and immediately after they had passed him, he could run up as others did to help Matthews.

"He would trust to the cloud of dust to conceal him from observation as he got up from his place in the grass.

"After that it would be plain sailing, for he would be one of a good many others at the spot and nobody would suspect this clever trick.

"Now, where is Beck?"

Trim looked around the stable but did not see the man in green.

"It is just as well," he thought, "I'm certain that Beck did the job and I'm equally certain that he is playing this game with Warren.

"Now they have succeeded in throwing this race in the way they want, it will be a good deal better to let Beck go for the present and prevent them from disabling Mephisto in the same or some other way for the next race.

"If I let Beck go now, I believe I shall be able to catch them both as well as save Mephisto from losing."

CHAPTER III.

FOUND DROWNED.

Before he left the stables Trim had a short conversation with O'Brien.

"What do you know?" the latter asked abruptly.

"I know how the thing was done," responded Trim, "and I know who did it."

"You mean," demanded O'Brien excitedly, "that you're certain that there was crooked work?"

"Sure as daylight."

"Then jump on them, Trim, jump on them and I'll protest the race to the judges and prevent the stakes from being paid to the owners of Reno."

"Wait a minute," said Trim calmly.

"Hey?"

"I want to ask you something."

"Well, what is it?"

"Mephisto is in for a big race next week, isn't he?"

"You bet he is!"

"Which would you rather do, protest this race and have a long lot of trouble over it which might result in catching one of the two villains who did you, or quietly let this thing pass, win the race with Mephisto and make dead certain of catching both the rascals?"

"I don't believe," O'Brien responded doubtfully, "that I understand you fully, but I should say that it would be better to take a course that would result in doing up both of the scoundrels if there are two of them."

"I haven't a doubt on that matter," Trim replied, "and I know perfectly well that if a row is raised about this

it will put those two fellows upon their guard and before we could possibly get around to arrest them they would skip.

"I myself think it would be much better to let this race go with all its losses and make sure of preventing a fraud in the next race."

"As to my losses," said O'Brien with a queer smile, "I guess I can stand them."

"Didn't you back Starlight heavily?" asked Trim.

"I had some money on him," replied the owner, "but I was so dead certain that there was something wrong in the air, that at the last minute I quietly hedged and took enough on Reno to bring me out square."

"I don't suppose you're letting that be known generally?" asked Trim.

"Not much. That's between ourselves."

"But I thought you looked as if you lost your last friend when Starlight fell."

"Well, why shouldn't I? I like the horse and I like the jockey, and above all I like fair play.

"I had fixed my bets so that I wouldn't win or lose unless the race should go to the 'field.'

"I was hot and I still am, to think that there should have been any crooked work."

"I see. By the way, with whom did you place your money on Reno?"

"Oh, one of the new bookmakers out there in the ring."

"Which one?"

"His name is Warren."

"You don't say so!"

"I do. Do you know him?"

"Well," said Trim, "I've seen him before."

"How are you going to prevent any trouble with Mephisto?" asked O'Brien.

"I'll lay a trap for the two fellows that are putting up the job," Trim answered.

"You go along just as usual and if you don't see me for a day or two, don't worry.

"I'll stick to the case until the race is run."

"All right," said O'Brien, "I know you fellows can be trusted to attend to business and probably the less I have to say to you the better."

"Perhaps so. Anyway don't be surprised if you fail to see me for two or three days."

They returned to the betting ring by different ways, for Trim did not wish to be seen in company with O'Brien.

He felt very certain that Warren had had a hand in the upsetting of Starlight and he wished to prevent Warren from suspecting that O'Brien had put a detective on the matter.

"I shouldn't wonder," thought Trim as he made his way around to the betting ring, "if Warren was feeling rather sore.

"Of course he has raked in a great deal of money that had been bet on Starlight, but on the other hand here is O'Brien himself with big bets on Reno that will have to come out of Warren's pocket.

"It wouldn't surprise me if he came out of the game a loser after all."

The betting ring was almost deserted when Trim arrived there for the spectators had gone out to the rail to watch the last race of the day.

Trim saw that Warren was packing up his goods and making ready for departure.

The race was soon over and the winners came crowding back to cash their tickets.

Many of them of course had placed their money at Warren's stand.

Trim joined the crowd there and looked on.

All bets were freely paid until toward the end, when a young fellow who seemed to be acquainted with Warren,

stepped up and presented a handful of tickets.

"Whew!" exclaimed Warren, looking at them, "you've hit it heavy to-day, haven't you, Charley?"

"Picked the winner in five races out of six," the young man replied, "and for good fat stakes each time too."

"And you must have had a big roll with you," said Warren, "when you came to the track, for you didn't cash any of your tickets as you went along."

"No, I thought I'd let them pile up and surprise you."

"Well, you have surprised me," said the bookmaker.

"Hope I haven't broken you?"

"Oh no, although I have been a bit hard hit on that Treadwell Plate race."

"Why," exclaimed the young man, "I thought you were well fixed on that. Didn't you back Reno heavily?"

"Yes, but at the last minute a tremendous amount of money came in on Reno and of course I had to settle.

"It pretty nearly cleaned me out, but I'm all right, Charley."

"Oh, I have no doubt of that, Warren."

"I'm glad you haven't, for, say——"

"Well?"

"Would you object to settling at my house this evening?"

"Not at all if that will be any convenience to you."

"It would help me out a bit. I've got plenty of cash there and these tickets call for just about all I've got in the box."

"When shall I call, Warren?"

"Why, say ten o'clock. We'll have a bit of supper and talk the thing over.

"You're not afraid of my running away without paying, are you?"

"Not at all, Warren, I'll be there."

"So long then."

The young man put his winning tickets in his pocket and strolled away.

Trim walked after him taking a roll of bills from his pocket as he did so.

He ran into the young man as if he did not see him and then apologized.

"I was so excited counting my winnings," said Trim, "that I didn't see you."

"So you're in luck too, are you?" asked the young man pleasantly.

"Yes," Trim answered, "I struck it right on five races out of six."

"You don't say so!"

"I do though."

"That's funny, for that was just my luck!"

"Is that so?"

The young man was so pleased at hearing of another who had guessed the winners as luckily as himself, that he easily fell in conversation with Trim, and they talked together all the way on the train to Long Island City.

Trim's object was to find out as much as he could about Warren.

He learned that his companion's name was Charles Brewer, and that he had know Warren but a few weeks.

Brewer himself was a rather wealthy young man, who was more interested in horse races than anything else.

He knew all the bookmakers well and had taken a great fancy for Warren, who, he said was a square man and very much of a gentleman.

"I won a big pot from him to-day," Brewer said cheerfully. "I guess he was pretty hard hit for he asked me to settle with him at his house this evening."

"Will he do it?" asked Trim innocently.

"Oh yes, he's square."

Trim shook his head.

"I'd rather get my money before I leave the track."

"That's right," responded Brewer, "but I know Warren, you see and I'm certain that he will treat me all right.

"He'll have the money for me to-night without fail."

"I suppose he must be a pretty rich man," remarked Trim thoughtfully.

"Oh, I don't know," returned Brewer, who seemed to be much amused at Trim's greenness.

"What makes you think so?"

"Why if he has money enough to lose a lot of bets I should think of course he must be rich."

"He has to have ready money for his kind of business of course," responded Brewer, "but I don't think you would speak of him as a rich man if you knew where he lived."

"Why, where is it?"

"Over on West Sixty-first Street near the river."

"I guess there are not many rich people who live there," said Trim.

"No, and Warren lives in the top flat of an ordinary house; but he lives well just the same and I shall have a good supper besides cashing in my winnings."

Before the conversation ended Trim managed to learn the number of Warren's house.

He had not fully planned his trap for Warren, but he had gained all the information that he needed, for he knew now where to place the man if he wanted him.

He did not care so much about Beck, because he knew that Beck must be merely Warren's assistant and he believed that the next step in the game would take place at O'Brien"s stables which were located not far from Jamaica.

O'Brien had been so suspicious of coming trouble with his horses that he had recently set up separate stables near Jamaica and kept his thoroughbreds and trainers there until the day before any race in which his horses were to take part.

Trim intended to go to Jamaica on the following afternoon.

There was nothing for him to do meantime and how he passed the time need not be described.

He was eating luncheon in a restaurant at about noon the next day when a boy came in crying an extra edition of an evening paper.

Trim bought a copy and looked it over to see what news had caused the getting out of an edition at such an early hour.

The most important item seemed to be the discovery of a dead body in the water off the Battery.

It was that of a young man who had apparently been in good health.

According to the newspaper report the man's hands indicated that he had never been obliged to work for a living, while his clothes were those of a common laborer.

There was nothing in the clothing and no mark upon the body to identify him.

It was a commonplace occurrence and Trim would have paid no attention to it if it had not been that on his way to the Long Island Ferry he had to pass very near to the morgue.

This is situated at Bellevue Hospital and as Trim passed the hospital it occurred to him that he would visit the morgue and take a look at the body that had been found near the Battery.

He did so and to his surprise he recognized the face of Charles Brewer.

He said nothing about it at the time, but went away thinking pretty hard and took the train as he had planned for Jamaica.

When he arrived there he went straight out to O'Brien's stables and had a talk with the horse owner.

"You've no idea, young man," said O'Brien, "how carefully we have to look after the horses just previous to a race!"

"I suppose you have to look out for their feed——" began Trim.

"Oh rats!" interrupted O'Brien con-

temptuously, "of course we have to look out for their feed.

"What I'm thinking of is the way we have to take care that no mean tricks are done by outsiders.

"Now, there's my horse Mephisto, for example.

"He is going to run next week and a great many have picked him for a winner.

"Don't you see that if that horse can be disabled just previous to the race, there's a chance for crooked bookmakers to clear a big stake?"

"Yes, I see that."

"Well, I'm afraid of them all the time, they try to bribe my stable hands, they try to buy my jockeys."

"I presume you trust all the men employed by you, don't you?"

"Oh yes, so far as I trust anybody; but the stables are surrounded all the time by fellows who are trying to get a squint at the horses and I'm afraid of them."

"What do these fellows want?" asked Trim.

"Oh, they're touters most of them. They come around trying to get tips which they will sell afterward at the race track.

"I'm afraid of them and I keep my horses out of their way as much as possible.

"As long as I exercise them on private grounds I can succeed to some extent, but even at that they bother me a good deal.

"There's that man with the big red beard for example."

"Ah!" said Trim. "Who is he?"

"I don't know. I only know that whenever Mephisto is taken out for exercise, the rider will come across that red-bearded man somewhere looking on.

"Sometimes he is loafing under a tree, sometimes he's walking along the road, but every time we are out with the horse we are perfectly certain to run across this fellow somewhere.

"I am afraid of him."

"Do these touters live here in Jamaica?" asked Trim.

"Some of them do, and there are quite a number of them who are lodging here just because I brought my horses out here."

"How many horses have you got in your stables?"

"There are about twenty there now."

"May I look them over?"

"Certainly, come along."

They entered the stable and O'Brien pointed out one horse after another giving the names and bringing Trim at last to the side of Mephisto.

"Why hello," said Trim suddenly, "Mephisto looks very much like a horse I saw in one of the stalls back there."

"Yes," responded O'Brien, "that was Bantry."

"Is Bantry a good horse?"

"Isn't worth his feed."

"That's funny for he looks almost exactly like Mephisto."

"It would be hard to tell them apart," said O'Brien, "if it wasn't for the fact that Bantry has a white mark on his chest."

"Have you seen that red-bearded man to-day?" asked Trim.

"Yes, he was around this forenoon."

"Which way was he going?"

"I saw him go off toward Jamaica less than an hour ago."

"I think I will go and look him up."

As Trim walked back to the village he was thinking of a good deal besides O'Brien's fears for his horse Mephisto.

He could not get the fate of Charles Brewer out of his head.

"That young man," he thought, "not only had won a big stake from Warren, but according to his own admission he had plenty of ready money about him also.

"Quite likely he took that ready money with him to Warren's last night.

"Even if he didn't his death would save Warren from paying a heavy loss.

"Now, if the New York police don't discover who Brewer is and how he came to his death, I'll have to take a hand in that matter too."

CHAPTER IV.

SILAS BASCUM B'GOSH!

He was thinking the thing over as he walked along the main street in the village when he caught sight of Frank Beck entering a small hotel.

Beck was not dressed in a green suit now and he did not look like an ordinary stable hand either.

Trim at once entered the same hotel and looked around in the office and barroom for Beck, but the man had disappeared.

Trim sat down to wait for Beck to turn up again intending to shadow him.

He had not been waiting five minutes before Warren came in.

The latter went through the office and up the stairs.

"It's all right," thought Trim, "they are working together. Perhaps I'll have a chance to shadow them both."

Two or three minutes later Warren and Beck came down the stairs together and left the hotel.

Instead of shadowing them Trim suddenly changed his mind.

A new thought had occurred to him which was the beginning of a plan for catching Warren in a neat trap.

He sat quietly for several minutes and then went up the stairs himself.

He heard somebody stirring in a room and knocked at the door.

When it was opened, Trim started as if with surprise and said:

"I beg pardon I thought this was Mr. Warren's room."

"Warren?" returned the man inside, "no, you're mistaken. His room is No. 23, I think.

Trim apologized again and went on.

He knocked at No. 23 but of course received no reply.

The hallway was empty and he quietly applied his pick lock and entered the room.

A glance was sufficient to show him that he was in the right place.

There were two bags on the floor beside the bureau.

One was the bag in which bookmakers carry their materials and the other was an ordinary traveling bag.

Trim worked rapidly for he did not know at what moment Warren might return.

He left the bookmaker's bag entirely alone and picked up the other.

The lock was a small affair that could not be worked with his pick lock.

This did not discourage him.

He had a little thin wire in his pocket and a pair of pinchers with which he bent the wire into a hook.

This he inserted into the key-hole and after a little twisting and feeling, managed to shoot back the bolt. Then the bag came open and lying on the top of the few articles it contained, he saw what he had more than half expected to find, a heavy red beard.

He took pains not to disturb it, but reached his hand down, lifting up one after another of the articles in the bag, to make out just what they were.

At the very bottom was a small cardboard box.

He took this out and opened it and found that it contained a little rubber bulb with a nipple attached to it.

"A hypodermic syringe," muttered Trim. "Just about what I expected.

"All right, Mr. Warren, we'll just let you work your little game to your own satisfaction."

Trim replaced the syringe in the box

and put it down again at the bottom of the bag. Then he locked the bag and left the room.

He stayed in Jamaica during the rest of the day, but did not see Warren again until evening.

The office of the hotel was at that time pretty well filled with idlers and Warren who came in and dropped into a chair began to read a newspaper.

Trim was sitting in a corner watching him.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Warren suddenly, jumping up and looking hard at his paper.

"What's the matter?" asked one of the loungers.

"Why, here's a fellow that I know right well who has gone and committed suicide!" Warren exclaimed.

"Is that so, who was he?"

"His name was Brewer," replied Warren.

"The paper says that his body was found in the water off the Battery at an early hour this morning.

"It wasn't identified until some time this afternoon.

"This is terrible!

"Why, gentlemen, I saw Brewer last evening at my own house and he seemed as well a man as you could wish.

"In fact I never knew him to be so cheerful!"

"That's just the way with suicides," remarked one of the listeners.

"'At the very last moment they are generally laughing and joking as if they enjoyed life thoroughly."

Warren shook his head gravely.

"This is dreadful!" he said.

"I can't understand it, for Charley had no reason for ending his life."

"No money troubles?" asked one of the men.

"Well, I should say not. Why, he was running over with money.

"I ought to know for he took a good wad out of me yesterday at the races."

Warren sat down and stared about him blankly.

The others looked over the paper to read the account.

Presently Warren looked at his watch and said:

"There is no use talking about this; it's a serious matter for me and I must go straight back to New York and let the police know what I know about it."

With this he left the hotel and of course Trim followed after him.

It is hardly necessary to go into the details of Trim's shadowing of Warren.

For nearly three days and nights he hardly slept.

Wherever Warren went Trim also went and when the suspected man was asleep, Trim was lingering near his house, always in the hope of getting some light upon the mystery of Brewer's death.

O'Brien's matter was not neglected meantime for Trim was certain that whatever crookedness was being cooked up was arranged by Warren himself, and therefore the detective was really attending to the horse owner's affairs while he was watching Warren.

In brief it may be said that Warren went straight to the police and told them what he knew about Brewer.

He explained the circumstances of Brewer's winning from him at Sheepshead Bay and declared that a full settlement had been made at his house at ten o'clock in the evening.

He said further that Brewer left the house at about eleven o'clock in the best of spirits.

Trim believed that there was a screw loose in this story somewhere, but he could not satisfy himself about it because there was evidence at the coroner's inquest not only that Brewer had been seen climbing the stairs to Warren's flat, but also seen going out again.

The janitor of the building was putting out the lights in the hallways when he heard Warren saying good-night to Brewer on the landing above him.

A moment later a man came down the stairs and went on to the street.

In the darkness the janitor did not get a very good look at him and in fact he paid no especial attention to him.

He was quite certain however that this was the same man who had called on Warren an hour or so before, so if anybody besides Trim had suspicions of Warren, they were entirely cleared away.

It was generally supposed that members of the river gang, which has its headquarters generally up in that part of the city where Warren lived, had learned somehow of Brewer's luck and that they waylaid him upon the street, stripping him of his clothing, murdering him and then putting worn-out clothing upon the body.

The case attracted no attention after the coroner's inquest and probably it would have been forgotten if it had not been for Trim's firm conviction that Warren was the murderer of Brewer.

Meantime there were races every other day at Sheepshead, and Warren continued to make books there as before.

Trim shadowed him and saw that he frequently had conversations with Beck, who sometimes turned up in the betting ring as a sport and at other times prowled around the stables dressed as a hostler.

The day of the race in which Mephisto was to run was approaching and O'Brien was getting more and more nervous about the fate of his horse.

Trim tried to assure him that everything would be all right but O'Brien was so worried that he decided at length not to send Mephisto over to Sheepshead until about noon of the day on which the race was to be run.

Meantime Warren was living at the hotel in Jamaica where Trim had examined his traveling bag.

He did not go to New York at all after the inquest upon Brewer was concluded.

On the afternoon of the day before the great race, an old fellow, whose appearance caused a smile wherever he went, trudged along the main street of Jamaica carrying a much-worn carpet bag in one hand and a green cotton umbrella in the other.

There was a long straggling gray beard falling over his collar.

Big silver-rimmed spectacles were on his nose and on his head there was a straw hat that must have been worn for twenty years.

His coat was an immense linen duster that almost dragged upon the ground as he walked.

He stared about him as he went and turned curiously from time to time to see what people were laughing at.

It did not seem to strike him that he was the cause of their fun.

He stood for two or three minutes on the sidewalk across the street from the hotel and finally walked over, and entered the office.

At that moment Warren and two or three others were sitting there.

The old man approached the clerk's desk, set down his bag and putting both hands upon the counter, asked:

"Say, can I stop here?"

"Certainly," replied the clerk, trying to keep from smiling, "I suppose you'd like a good room?"

"Well I guess I've got to have somethin' tew sleep in," returned the old fellow.

"What are ye goin' tew charge for it?"

"We have various prices," answered the clerk, "from a dollar up——"

"Sho! As much as a dollar?"

"That's the lowest price we have for a room, sir; it's the busy season, sir."

"Gosh, but ye must make money!"

"We manage to make a living, sir. Will you write your name on this book?"

"What for?"

"Simply that we may know who you are."

"Huh! I'm free tew tell you that.

"I don't keer who knows who I be. My name's Silas Bascum and I hain't ashamed of it, b'gosh!"

"No, certainly not, sir, but it's customary for visitors to put their name on the books."

"'Tis, hey? Well, say——"

"What is it, sir?"

"I guess I hain't no visitor when ye

charge me a dollar for puttin' up with ye over night.

"Places where I go visiting, they don't charge nothin'."

"I guess you don't go visiting in hotels then, sir?"

"Guess I don't. Say! Do I have to write my name here?"

"Yes, on that line, and over here you must write where you come from."

"Sho! I hain't ashamed of that nuther. I come from Sag Harbor, I do."

The old man wrote his name very slowly upon the book and then rested before putting down the words Sag Harbor.

Warren and the others in the room had gathered around to watch him.

"I came up tew see the races," remarked the old man, blinking at them through his spectacles.

"Is that so?" asked Warren, who seemed anxious to make the old fellow talk.

"The races are going to be run at Sheepshead Bay, not here."

"I know that," retorted Bascum promptly, "but I won't put up there!"

"Why not?"

"'Cause I don't dares to."

"What are you afraid of?"

"Sharpers."

"Well, that's right; you must look out. There are lots of sharpers around the race tracks."

"So I've heerd tell. I come from Sag Harbor."

Here the old man began to write this name on the book.

"But I read the newspaper. I take a paper every week and it often tells about farmers bein' cheated by sharpers.

"I hain't goin' to get caught, I tell ye."

"That's right," said Warren in a friendly way.

"I suppose you're going to back some of the horses, ain't you?"

"Shouldn't wonder if I did put up a dollar or two.

"I bet five dollars last week with Luke Harlowe, one of my neighbors. We had a race on a piece of road aobut two miles t'other side of Sag Harbor and I beat him."

"And you've come up here to blow in your winnings, I suppose?"

"Oh, I've got more'n that tew blow in, mister.

"I don't dress as well as some of you city fellows, but I've saved my money and I think I know a good piece of horse-flesh when I've seen it tew."

"I don't doubt but you do."

"An' I've seen a good piece to-day tew."

"So! what was it?"

"It was a cretur owned by this Irishman O'Brien out here a piece. What in tarnation is the name—Mephis—Mephis——"

"Oh, Mephisto," said Warren.

"Yep, Mephisto was the name. I'm goin' to put all the money I've got on him."

"There are other people," said Warren, "who think Mephisto is a good horse too."

"Well, they're jest right, but there hain't anybody has had a better chance than I have had to know it."

"Why what do you mean by that, Mr. Bascum?"

"Why I felt of the cretur."

"What!"

"I did. It was this mornin' at eleven o'clock I was walkin' out there and the horse was being led up an' down back of the stables jest for exercise.

"He was all blanketed up and you couldn't see much more'n his feet and his head, but I asked the stable boy a lot of questions and felt of him.

"I says to myself, says I, Si, that's the animal ye want to bet on and I'm a-goin' to do it, tew."

Warren was greatly interested.

"Do you mean to say," he asked, "that the stable boy let you touch Mephisto?"

"Let me tetch him," retorted Bascum, "do I look as if I'd set a horse afire?

"Of course I tetched him. I know how to handle a horse, I do. But then, I should say that anybody could go out there and look the cretur over.

"Say mister," and here the old farmer turned to the clerk.

"Do I have to pay that dollar down?"

"Well it's customary, Mr. Bascum," returned the clerk.

"Well, I think it's jest about fifty cents too much, but when I'm with city folks I suppose I must do as city folks do.

"Here's your money."

Mr. Bascum took from an inside pocket of his duster an old and very large leather wallet which seemed to be fairly bursting with bills.

He clumsily drew a one-dollar bill from the lot and passed it over.

In doing so he could not help showing Warren and the others that he had a very large sum of money in the wallet.

A porter stepped up to take his bag to his room.

"I shall be glad to show you around, Mr. Bascum," said Warren pleasantly, "if you feel like a little walk."

"Much obleeged," returned the farmer, "I'll be down jest as soon as I've learned the way to my room.

"I bet it ain't worth more'n fifty cents, but I guess I'll have to stand it."

He hobbled up the stairs after the porter, while Warren and the others in the office joined in hearty laughter at his greenness.

"I say!" exclaimed one of the men, "but won't he be a mark for some of the touts at Sheepshead!"

"No he won't," returned Warren.

"Why not then?"

"Because he's an innocent, well-meaning old fellow, and he ought to have been kept at home. I'm going to take care of him.

"I don't say that I won't take his bets if he wants to put up money, but I won't see him swindled."

CHAPTER V.

WARREN FALLS INTO THE TRAP.

A few minutes later Mr. Bascum came hobbling downstairs again.

"Say," he said to the clerk, "if I was running a hotel I'd let that room for thirty cents. It ain't worth a copper more."

"Rent is higher here than it is in Sag Harbor, Mr. Bascum," responded the clerk politley.

"Yes, I guess it is, but if I thought ye was chargin' me more'n ye dew the city fellers——"

"Same price to all, Mr. Bascum."

"Yes that's right," said Warren, "they won't swindle you in this house, Mr. Bascum."

"I guess they wouldn't do it more'n once," said Mr. Bascum.

"Did you see ye wanted tew take a walk?"

"Well, I thought you might want to look around the town."

"Come along then, I can walk as far as any man half my age."

Warren opened the door and Bascum went out ahead of him.

They strolled slowly down the sidewalk talking about the weather and crops, but before long Warren turned the conversation to horses.

"You surprise me, Mr. Bascum," he said, "when you say you were allowed to go anywhere near Mephisto!"

"Don't they 'low other people to see their horses?" asked Bascum.

"No. They have been keeping people away as much as possible.

"What makes them so skittish?"

"I don't know, and perhaps I was mistaken about it. Tell me just how you did it."

"Why there ain't no 'how' tew it.

"I heerd a lot about O'Brien's horses and I was jest amblin' 'round the stable to see 'em.

"There was a young chap leadin' of a horse up an' down an' I asked him about it, that's all.

"He tole me lots of things about it."

"What, for instance?"

"Well, he said as how the horse had to be took keer of jest as reg'lar as a prize fighter.

"Every mornin', says he, at eleven o'clock I have to take Mephis—what you call him?"

"Mephisto," said Warren.

"He had to take Mephisto out of the stables and walk him up an' down for jest twenty minutes, no more, no less, an' then he took him back into his stall again an' give him a quart of malt."

"That's interesting," said Warren, "I never heard of that treatment."

"It's right though, I guess, for I hung 'round 'till I seen him take the horse back; then there was other horses brought out and walked 'round pretty much the same way.

"They seemed to be takin' more keer of Mephisto than any of the others."

"Every morning at eleven o'clock, did you say?" asked Warren.

"That's what the boy tole me."

"And nobody tried to scare you away when you tried to touch the horse?"

"Didn't say a word tew me.

"If ye want tew take a look at him there hain't no reason why ye shouldn't do it jest as I did, but I tell you now, mister, that Mephisto is a cute cretur.

"I'll bet fifty cents he's goin' to win the race."

"I shouldn't wonder," answered Warren, and then turned the conversation to other subjects.

He talked pleasantly with Bascum about his farm and gave him a great deal of advice as to how to take care of himself at the race course and in fact grew very friendly with him.

When they separated for the evening Mr. Bascum had received an invitation from Warren to take supper with him at his flat in West Sixty-first Street, New York, on the following day.

Bascum accepted the invitation and seemed very glad to get it for he declared that he wanted to see more of New York than he had ever seen.

"I've been there quite a number of times," he said, "but I never stopped over night. I'm jest scared of the hotels."

"When are you going down to the race track?" asked Warren.

"Right smart early in the mornin'," returned Bascum promptly. "I've heerd there's quite a number of people go there tew see the races an' I want tew be there early enough tew get a good place.

"When be ye goin?"

"I shan't be able to go until about noon," returned Warren.

"Important business will keep me here until then, but I'll see you there.

"You'll find me in the betting ring right near the north end."

"All right, mister, I'll look for ye."

Next morning Mr. Bascum started shortly after a very early breakfast for Sheepshead Bay.

He got off at the first station beyond Jamaica and started off across the fields toward O'Brien's stables.

As he was passing through a little grove he took his straggling beard from his chin, pulled off his linen duster, and after two or three other changes became the familiar figure of Trim Carter.

He concealed his disguise among some bushes and then hurried on to the stables.

There he found O'Brien in a nervous fever for fear something should yet happen to spoil Mephisto's chances of winning the race that afternoon.

O'Brien was glad to see Trim and at once asked if anything had happened.

"Something is going to happen," replied Trim, "and it'll happen to your horse Bantry.

"I believe you said Bantry wasn't worth his feed?

"You wouldn't mind if he was taken sick to-day, then, would you?"

"Not a bit."

"Then I'll be your stable boy from now until noon and at eleven o'clock I want Bantry to be covered with Mephisto's blankets.

"If you want to see your red-bearded friend then, you can watch from some window at the back of the stables, but don't let yourself be seen."

O'Brien was surprised but he was a man of few words and he agreed to follow Trim's suggestion.

"I'll do anything you say," he exclaimed, "and if you'll only catch the rascals that are trying to queer my horses, I'll make it worth your while."

"I'll do that easily enough," Trim answered, "but I have got another mission in this thing."

"Is that so? What is your mission?"

"That's a secret, Mr. O'Brien. If I succeed in it you will know before many days pass."

"All right then; I hope you'll win out, that's all I've got to say."

Trim borrowed a suit of clothes from a hostler and disguised himself as a stable boy.

Promptly at eleven o'clock he led Bantry from the stable around to the back and began to walk him up and down.

The horse was blanketed so that the white star upon his chest was concealed.

Trim had not been at work thus for more than five minutes before a man who had a heavy red beard came strolling up.

The man stopped a short distance away

and looked on for a while without saying anything.

At last he drew near and asked:

"What horse is that, young fellow?"

"This is the great Mephisto, boss," replied Trim.

"Is that so? He's going to run at Sheepshead Bay this afternoon, ain't he?"

"You bet! and he'll run away from anything there, you bet."

"I shouldn't wonder."

The red-bearded man drew a few steps nearer.

"Splendid animal, isn't he?"

"You bet," returned Trim.

"Seems to be as gentle as a carriage horse, too."

"He'll do anything you want him to," Trim responded promptly, "but you get him on the race track, then you'll see spirit."

"I suppose so," said the man and he came clear up to the horse and patted the animal upon his blanketed neck.

"He doesn't seem to mind a stranger a bit," said the man.

"Oh no," Trim responded, "he knows friends when he sees them."

"That's right. He's a fine horse."

The red-bearded man was feeling Bantry all over, and Trim could see that he was trying to get his hand under the blanket.

"His flesh is as firm as a rock, ain't it?" asked Trim.

"Seems to be," the man returned.

He now had his hand under the blanket.

"His skin is as smooth as— Whew! what's the matter?"

The man jumped back, for Bantry had suddenly reared up on his hind legs and began to snort and neigh.

"Something has made him a little nervous, I guess," said Trim.

"You'd better clear out, mister, for if old O'Brien should hear the racket and see a stranger prowling around, he wouldn't like it."

"Well I'm sorry if I have made him nervous," said the red-bearded man backing away. "I'll get out if you think it's likely to give you any trouble."

"It might," said Trim.

Accordingly Warren, for of course it was he who wore the red beard, marched off and when he was out of sight Trim led Bantry into the stables.

"Now what was that all about?" said O'Brien, coming down from the loft where he had been watching the scene.

"Why it's just this," said Trim beginning to take off his disguise.

"You've got a sick horse on your hands and his name is Bantry.

"That man was Warren the bookmaker. He had a hypodermic syringe in his hand and he's plugged a dose of poison in Bantry's skin.

"Bantry couldn't run a mile an hour this afternoon but the dose won't kill him."

"And he thinks," cried O'Brien, "that he has plugged Mephisto?"

"That's it exactly and he will go down to Sheepshead Bay now and take all the bets that can possibly be laid on Mephisto."

"Then we'll have him!" exclaimed O'Brien, rubbing his hands. "But how about the other fellow?"

"The other fellow isn't likely to trouble you," Trim replied, "because he is simply Warren's assistant.

"I shall be on hand to look after things and after you have won the race, as I suppose you will, I shall take care that Warren and his side partner are put where they cannot do any more damage of this kind."

"And how about your secret mission?"

"Oh I shall look after that at the same time."

CHAPTER VI.

IN THE BETTING RING.

When Trim left O'Brien he went back to the grove where he had hidden his disguise and quickly transformed himself again into Mr. Silas Bascum, of Sag Harbor. Then he went on to the railroad station and took the next train for Sheepshead Bay.

The crowd was already beginning to arrive.

Nearly every stand in the betting ring was occupied by the bookmakers who were setting up their blackboards and preparing to receive bets.

Over at the north end of the ring was Warren's stand.

Trim strolled up to it and found Beck at work there.

A good many curious glances were turned toward Trim and he heard more than one tough-looking man wondering if "the old jay" had a wad with him.

He was frequently approached by touters who tried to sell him tips and programmes.

Trim played his part well, always claiming to be afraid of sharpers and telling everybody that he read the newspapers and that they couldn't fool him.

Beck looked at him with a smile as he approached and waved his hand to him.

"Good-morning, young man," said Trim, "how be ye?"

"Good-morning, Mr. Bascum," said Beck holding out his hand, "for I suppose that is your name, isn't it?"

"Well, I vum!" exclaimed Trim.

"How did you get on to that?

"I hain't tole my name since I left Jamaica.

"Say, ye hain't no bunco man, be ye?"

"Not I, Mr. Bascum, but I've heard of you just the same."

"Sho!"

"This is Mr. Warren's stand. You see——"

"Warren—why he's the feller that I'm tryin' tew find."

"Exactly, Mr. Bascum. Mr. Warren is delayed by business this morning but he told me to be on the lookout for you and to do everything to make you feel comfortable.

"Have you got a seat on the grand stand?"

"Ye bet I hain't!"

"Shan't I get you one?"

"No siree!"

"Why I thought you wanted to get a good place, Mr. Bascum?"

"So I did and I was willin' to pay twenty-five cents for it, but when they tole me what it cost to sit up there on a board I tole 'em I didn't want to buy a whole race track!"

"They do charge pretty high."

"Should think they did. I'd rather save my money and bet it on Mephisto."

"I guess that's a good idea, Mr. Bascum. You think well of Mephisto, do you?"

"Do I? Say, b'gosh I think that's the slickest cretur I ever seen in the way of horseflesh, young man."

"I guess you're a good judge of horses, Mr. Bascum?"

"Well I guess I've followed a plow and druv tew market often 'nough to know suthin' about 'em."

"And so you think you'll take a chance on Mephisto, do you?"

"Shouldn't be surprised if I did."

Trim slowly took out his big wallet and half removed a bill from the fat roll it contained.

He replaced the bill suddenly and put the wallet in his pocket, saying he guessed he'd wait a while and see how the betting was going.

Beck advised him to not to wait too long and Trim promptly answered that he'd get his money down before the bell rung.

The detective's purpose in showing his wallet was to convince Beck that he had a great deal of money with him.

Beck would of course tell this to Warren and Trim hoped that they would give him a chance to play his deep game later.

He was already certain that he had done all that could be done for O'Brien and that the horse owner would win the race unless Mephisto found that a better animal had been put up against him.

Trim was working now upon what he called his secret mission, that is, the mystery of Charley Brewer's death.

He left Warren's stand and passed out through the betting ring to the rail near the grand stand.

It was already lined with spectators who had come early to get a good place.

As Trim walked along he saw that he was being followed by a man, and suspecting what was up, he took pains to stand in such a way that this man could approach him.

The man did so, acting as if he were trying to get close to the rail.

He pushed up against Trim and crowded him against the others.

Trim did not seem to notice the crowding but he kept his eyes open and presently he felt a slight movement underneath his left arm.

He immediately brought his arm [illegible] to his side, wheeled about and struck the

man who had been following him, squarely upon the jaw.

Trim did not put the whole of his force into the blow for fear that he should give away his real character, but he struck powerfully enough to send the man staggering back.

Others turned around to see what was up.

Trim immediately began to bawl at the top of his lungs:

"Thieves! Pickpockets!

"Put that man in the lock-up!

"B'gosh I'll have ye understan' I hain't tew be robbed even if I do come from Sag Harbor!"

Meantime he flourished his cotton umbrella wildly and jabbed the point of it at the man whom he had struck.

Everybody was interested and amused.

"What's the matter here?" demanded a policeman who came hurrying up.

"That scalawag there," exclaimed Trim, pointing to the man who was trying to sneak away, "tried to rob me, and by hooky, I ketched him in the act, I did!

"Look at this!"

With these words Trim raised his left arm and showed that a slit had been cut in his linen duster.

At the same time he reached his hand into his pocket and pulled out his wallet.

"There 'tis," he cried, "and by gum, I'm goin' to keep it!

"I've read the newspapers, I have, and I've got my eyes peeled for jest such chaps as that!

"I want you to take him up, Mr. Policeman, and make him pay for this hole in my coat, tew."

There was a great laugh at this from everybody except the pickpocket who looked sour enough.

The policeman of course put him under arrest and asked Trim to follow him to the station in order to make a complaint.

Trim did so promptly and as they were passing through the betting ring on the way to the station he met Warren.

"Good-morning, Mr. Bascum," said Warren cheerfully.

"Have you been enjoying yourself?"

"Oh I've been havin' a thunderin' good time," replied Trim. "I'm showing these city scalawags that I'm tew swift for 'em."

"Why, what's the matter?"

"That feller there," pointing to the prisoner, "who hain't fit to pull weeds in a 'tater patch, tried to rob me of my wallet.

"I'm goin' to carry it in my hand the rest of the day and the policeman wants me to go now and make a complaint against him."

"Well, well," said Warren, "I'm sorry I couldn't get here earlier for I was afraid you might get into just such trouble."

"Oh it ain't no trouble at all, I rather like it."

"Glad to hear that and I hope it won't scare you away?"

"No siree. I came down to see the races and I'm a-goin' tew bet my money on Mephisto.

"Nothin' will scare me away from that!"

"You've got the real sporting blood, Mr. Bascum."

Warren took Trim's arm and walked along with him to the station house.

There a complaint was entered against the pickpocket, and then they returned to the betting ring.

It was so clear that Trim had completely deceived Warren by his disguise and clever acting, that he did not hesitate to spend nearly all of the afternoon at Warren's betting stand.

He could thus keep his men in view without attracting the least suspicion as to his purpose.

The races went on very much as usual.

Warren was apparently doing a fair business, but he was making a specialty of taking money on Mephisto.

He did this so freely that after a time nearly everybody who wanted to back that horse brought his money to Warren's stand, and the result was that before the great race was run, Warren had more bets on his book than any of the other bookmakers.

No one could understand why it was that he took such rash chances on the great favorite of the day, but the bettors were too eager to place their money to ask questions.

Trim himself after a great deal of ap-

parent hesitation, laid a hundred dollars on the horse and somewhat to his surprise Warren did not urge him to bet higher.

Trim believed he saw the reason for this after thinking it over a moment.

"Warren expects to have me in his house to-night," he thought, "and so he feels sure of getting my wad anyway.

"It doesn't make any difference to him whether I bet now or not."

Mephisto was to run in the fourth race.

While the third was being run and the betting ring was mostly deserted, Warren and Beck had a short conversation in French.

Of course they had no idea that the old farmer from Sag Harbor could understand them, but Trim took it all in, while he was apparently watching the race through a spyglass that Warren had loaned to him.

"We shall make a big haul to-day," was the way Warren began it.

"It's make or break," responded Beck doubtfully. "I can't help feeling a little nervous."

"Why should you?"

"Well, if Mephisto should happen to win there would be nothing for us to do but welch our bets or go out of business."

"Mephisto won't win I tell you."

"I'm glad you feel so sure about it but——"

"There isn't any but, Frank. I gave him a mighty good dose and I'm certain of the way it will act."

"Suppose," asked Beck, "the medicine should make the horse too sick to come to the track?

"How would you like that?"

"It won't work that way," was Warren's response.

"Mephisto will appear to be just as well as usual and he'll make a start, but the hot riding will cause him to weaken before he is half way round the course.

"More than likely he'll fall in a faint long before he gets into the home stretch.

"I should like it a little better of course if Mephisto should be able to get clear around the course.

"He certainly won't have strength enough to win, but suppose he does faint away, he'll be a loser just the same and the pot will be ours, so what do we care?"

"You're thinking of tapping 'the old jay' too, ain't you?" asked Beck.

"Of course. I don't intend to let ripe fruit fall into other people's hands when I might as well pick it myself."

By this time the third race had been finished and men were crowding back into the betting ring to cash their winning tickets and make new bets on the next event.

The excitement was quite as great as it was upon the day when Starlight ran.

Warren's boldness in betting against Mephisto had upset the calculations of other bookmakers and a good many were beginning to quietly hedge on the result.

It was generally believed that Warren must have obtained some quiet information which led him to believe that Mephisto would not win.

Between those who were still confident that Mephisto was the best horse among the entries and those who believed that Warren had inside information, there was lively betting until the race was called.

During this race Warren did not lend his glass to Trim, but kept his eyes glued to it watching from his stand in the betting ring.

Beck also had a glass and watched it too.

Trim stood by and awaited the result with a good deal of interest, hoping for O'Brien's sake that Mephisto would win.

It made no real difference to his plans for solving the mystery of Brewer's death which way the race went.

As there was a small "field" a fair start was soon made and the race was run through without incident.

From the very beginning Mephisto took the lead and held it without difficulty until near the home stretch.

There, other jockeys whipped up their horses and applied the spurs so hard that two of the racers began to overhaul the leader.

"It's all right!" whispered Warren excitedly, forgetting to speak in French, "Mephisto is beginning to weaken."

"Ain't Mephisto goin' tew be a winner, mister?" asked Trim with a great show of nervousness.

"I'm afraid not, Mr. Bascum," replied Warren, still looking through the glass, "but never you fear, I'll look out for you.

"I'll not let you lose a cent to-day."

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Beck with real anxiety.

"Mephisto seems to be drawing away from them again!"

"It can't be possible!" muttered Warren.

"But look, don't you see there's a clear two lengths between Mephisto and the nearest horses?"

"He will fall yet," returned Warren under his breath.

"He must do so!"

But Mephisto did not fall.

He thundered down the home stretch, increasing the distance between him and his rivals at every stride and won the race brilliantly, amid the roaring cheers of the thousands who packed the grand stand and the rail alongside.

Warren put down his glass with trembling hand and turned to Beck.

"We're done," he said in French.

"How could it have happened?" asked Beck in response.

"There's no use asking any such question as that," retorted Warren impatiently.

"The thing's done and we'll be broke if we pay all these bets."

"Can't we make a sneak of it?" asked Beck.

"No. It's too late.

"I was so confident that I had fixed Mephisto that he couldn't win that I haven't a thing packed up.

"If we were going to sneak we'd ought to have fixed things up during the race.

"No, we've got to stand it now and it'll break us; but we'll make up for it, Frank, by touching the wad of the 'old jay' to-night."

CHAPTER VII.

MRS. WARREN'S COFFEE.

Trim believed that it would be the best policy to show anxiety about his money so he was the first one to take his place in front of Warren's stand and present his winning ticket.

"By gum!" he exclaimed, "I wish Luke Harlowe was here now.

"Luke says to me, says he, you'll lose all your money, Si, if you go in among them sharpers at Sheepshead Bay.

"They won't let you win, says he, but I tole Luke I knew a thing or two and that I'd come home with more money than I took away.

"Guess I'm going to do it tew, hain't I, Mr. Warren?"

"I congratulate you, Mr. Bascum," responded Warren nervously, "here is your money.

"You won't forget that you're going to spend the evening and the night with me, will you?"

"No siree, an' I'd just like the chance tew, tew treat ye tew suthin'.

"I never won so much money afore in my life and there hain't nothin' mean about me neither.

"You jest let me know what ye want, Mr. Warren, on the way home and I'll treat."

"Thanks," Warren responded with a faint smile, "I'll go you on that when the time comes."

For the next ten minutes Warren and Beck were kept busy paying off the winning bets.

When all tickets had been presented they had hardly enough cash left in their box to get home on.

There was one more race on the programme however and they did their best to make up for part of their losses on that.

They won a trifle, but they had been hard hit and they knew that they could not hope to keep on with their business unless they succeeded in getting possession of Bascum's money.

Before the day's events were over Trim saw O'Brien looking around as if hunting for somebody in the betting ring.

The horse owner was looking for Trim, but the detective did not make himself known.

"O'Brien is feeling pretty good," he thought, "but there is nothing more that I can do for him and I'll let him alone until I've got through with Warren and Beck."

"I understand you didn't think much of Mephisto," remarked O'Brien, pausing in front of Warren's stand.

"We are liable to be mistaken, Mr. O'Brien," returned Warren soberly.

"Yes, so we are.

"Mephisto is in good enough shape to

run another race right now, but I've got one horse up at my barn that is so sick that he couldn't walk to a post."

"So?" asked Warren with an expression of surprise.

"What is the matter?"

"Oh I don't know," returned O'Brien with a shrug of the shoulders, "something wrong with his feed, I suppose."

"What horse is that?" asked Warren with assumed indifference.

"Bantry," replied O'Brien. "He ain't much of a horse so I don't care; but it's a rather funny thing that he looks exactly like Mephisto."

Warren was so staggered by this remark that he opened his mouth and stared at O'Brien without being able to make a reply.

O'Brien laughed and went on.

Trim, who was standing near, had overheard this conversation.

"Confound O'Brien," he said to himself, "what did he want to give that shot for?

"It may make Warren suspicious."

It was perfectly clear that Warren realized the mistake he had made, for he turned to Beck and said in French:

"Done, by thunder, done completely!"

"Did you plug the wrong horse?" asked Beck.

"Yes. I wouldn't have suspected that O'Brien was so sharp."

It did not look as if Warren suspected that the old farmer who had given him the tip about Mephisto's queer exercise, had had any hand in the trick.

In any case Trim felt that he was in for a struggle with the bookmaker.

"He still believes that I am a jay," thought Trim, "and he has got a trap for me.

"I shall walk into it and we'll see if I can't get out of it all right."

At the conclusion of the races therefore, Trim and Warren went to New York together.

Beck accompanied them as far as the Thirty-fourth Street Ferry where he said good-by and took a downtown car.

"He lives far down on the east side," remarked Warren as they started across town, "and I never see him excepting at the race track."

After this remark Warren was silent almost all of the way to his house.

He was evidently thinking of the serious business he was about to undertake.

Trim was not sorry for this for he had things to think of too and he did not like to risk overdoing the part that he was playing.

When at length they started down West Sixty-first Street Trim said:

"Say, Mr. Warren, I hain't treated ye yet.

"Hain't it about time that I should do so?"

"Well," responded Warren, "supper won't be ready for an hour or so. I suppose a little whisky wouldn't do me any harm."

They went into a saloon where for half an hour Warren drank rather freely.

It looked to Trim as if the bookmaker were trying to induce the old farmer to get full.

"I don't believe that's a part of his regular game," thought Trim, "but perhaps he thinks it will make it easier for him in this case."

The detective had little difficulty in avoiding trouble on this account, for though he pretended to drink every time that Warren did, he really took pains to merely touch the liquor to his lips and then unseen empty the glass upon the floor.

It was quite dark when at last they climbed the stairs to Warren's flat.

There they were met by a woman whom Warren introduced as his wife.

She was not a good-looking woman and Trim promptly decided that if there was any crookedness going on she would have a hand in it.

"I'll bet she's a tougher customer than her husband," was his silent remark.

Mrs. Warren had little to say but busied herself with preparing supper.

Warren, either because he was feeling the influence of liquor or because he thought it was the best policy to do so, talked all the time and apparently did his best to make the old farmer feel at home.

"This isn't the most sylish place in New York," was one of the things Warren said, "but we do manage to live well just the same.

"I believe in having a pool table.

"If I couldn't feed well I shouldn't feel that I was living."

"I guess ye have tew pay an awful lot for vegetables here?" Trim responded.

"Yes, but we get the best and we get things in New York that I don't believe you can get down in Sag Harbor."

"I guess that's likely, mister."

"Now for instance," continued Warren, "there's coffee.

"I'd be willing to bet that the coffee you have on your table, Mr. Bascum, is made up mostly of burnt beans."

"Sho!"

"Yes sir. They often put burnt beans in with coffee so as to cheat the country people."

"Well by gum! I'll speak to my grocer about that."

"I would if I were you.

"Now I am particularly fond of coffee and I always get the best.

"You must let me give you a pound or two to take home with you."

"Much obleeged, Mr. Warren."

"You'll like it, but there's one thing besides having the highest-priced coffee."

"What's that, mister?"

"You've got to know how to make it.

"Now I'd be willing to bet all the money that was bet on the races to-day that there isn't anybody in New York can make better coffee than my wife."

"Pleased to hear it."

"You just wait and see."

"I will," thought Trim, "and if I'm not mistaken all this talk about coffee has a double meaning.

"I think I shall have to manage somehow to go rather shy on Mrs. Warren's coffee."

Mrs. Warren had no servant.

She prepared the supper herself and brought it to the table.

All three sat down and ate freely.

Coffee was not brought on until the end. Then Mrs. Warren went out to the kitchen and came back with a steaming pot which she placed upon the table by her husband's side.

"At last," he said in a loud tone, "we come to the best thing in the feast.

"Pass your cup, Mr. Bascum."

Trim pushed his cup across the table and watched narrowly while Warren poured out the coffee.

"Milk and sugar to your own taste," remarked Warren, pushing the cup back.

"Now," thought Trim, "how am I going to play this game?

"I can't very well refuse to drink this coffee and yet I believe there's mischief in it."

He slowly poured milk and sugar into the cup and stirred it up.

Meantime Warren was pouring coffee from the same pot for himself.

"Won't you have a cup, my dear?" he asked.

"Not to-night, Henry," the woman answered.

"I've got a kind of a headache and I don't dare to drink any."

"That's too bad," said her husband, "but I wouldn't let a headache or anything else stand in the way of my coffee."

Saying this he helped himself to milk and sugar from the same pitcher and bowl that Trim had used, then raising his cup to his lips he said:

"I don't see why I shouldn't drink your health in coffee, Mr. Bascum, just as freely as I would in wine.

"Here's long life to you."

Trim was puzzled.

"I think I am pretty sharp," he reflected, "and if he had put any drug in my coffee I should have seen him.

"So far as I can see he is drinking exactly the same kind of stuff he poured out for me.

"What he can drink I can drink.

"The trick in this game must be somewhere else.

"The coffee probably is harmless; anyhow I've got to chance it."

Accordingly Trim raised his cup and both he and Warren drank freely.

The coffee tasted like the ordinary article, neither better nor worse, Trim thought, than could be had in many a restaurant or private house.

"Have another cup?" suggested Warren.

Believing it to be the part of his game to comply, Trim pushed his cup across the table to be refilled.

Even as he did so he began to feel queerly.

There was a blur before his eyes and he noticed that his cup collided with a dish and upset.

"Never mind, Mr. Bascum," he heard Mrs. Warren say and then everything became vacant.

Trim was asleep.

If he could have been conscious and unconscious at the same time he would have witnessed a very strange scene.

He would have seen that not only was old Silas Bascum, of Sag Harbor, sound asleep in his chair, but so also was Henry Warren, the swindling bookmaker.

Both men had yielded almost instantly to the effects of the drug contained in the coffee.

He would have seen more than this.

He would have known that Mrs. Warren ran hastily to the sideboard and produced a bottle from which she poured a few drops into a cup.

This she took to her husband and forced the liquor, whatever it was, between his lips.

It was an antidote to the poison contained in the coffee.

It did not work as quickly as the drug itself had, but after a time Warren shook himself and with a long breath opened his eyes.

"Did it work, Maria?" he asked.

"See for yourself," she answered, pointing to the sleeping Bascum.

Warren arose and stood for a moment leaning upon the table.

"It's hard to wake up from that," he muttered.

"However, I guess I'm all right now.

"Beck will be here in a half an hour and we might as well get the work done at once."

"You'd better take a few drops more," said Mrs. Warren, handing him the bottle containing the antidote.

"I'll see if the hallway is clear."

Warren did as she suggested and while she was absent from the room he went through Trim's pockets, took out the well-filled purse and every other article that he could find.

When his wife returned saying that everything was all right they lifted Trim from his chair, carried him into the hallway and so up a flight of steps that led them to the roof.

CHAPTER VIII.

A FRIGHTFUL AWAKENING.

Trim waked with a mixed sensation of alarm, dizziness and cold.

He was in total darkness and for an instant could not remember what had happened. Then the memory of Warren's supper flashed upon him and at the same instant he became aware that he was lying in water.

With more alarm than he had ever felt before in his life he tried to get up.

He got as far as his knees when his head bumped against something hard and solid above him.

The blow at first partially stunned him and for a moment he knelt, hands and knees in water, trying to recover his wits.

"I walked into the enemys' camp this time with a vengeance," he muttered.

"Now what is this and where is it and what am I going to do about it?"

It was the cold water that had awakened him and it was that as much as anything now that restored him fully to his senses.

He could hear a trickling showing that water was entering the place from a hole or spout.

He cautiously felt about him with his hands.

As he knelt there by stretching out his hands in both directions he could touch both sides of the place in which he found himself.

He had already learned by bumping his head how high it was.

"I am in a tank," he said to himself.

"It's gradually filling with water and if I hadn't waked up in about three minutes more I would have been drowned.

"I am likely to be drowned anyway if I don't get out of it."

He put his hands to the top and pushed with all his might.

He could not make the cover stir in the least. Then he felt rapidly in his pockets and found that everything had been taken away.

There was nothing, not even a knife with which he could pry or hammer.

He discovered also that he was not wearing now the clothes in which he had disguised himself as Silas Bascum.

He had on instead an ordinary suit.

ch as any workingman of the city ght wear.

His clothing had been changed for him hile he was unconscious.

"I've got to stop that water coming ." he exclaimed.

As not even a match had been left to he had to find the place where the er was pouring in by feeling along the ll of the tank.

He found it after a moment and by ling made out that the water poured in rough a small tube near the top of the nk.

Trim pressed his thumb against the ening and was relieved to find that he cked the flow instantly.

"This will give me time to think at st," he reflected.

He had no sooner got this comfort when heart sank again for he heard dis- tly the trickling of water at the other d of the tank.

He crawled across a distance of per- ps seven or eight feet and there found ter entering through another tube.

"Great Scott!" he muttered, "here these two openings placed so far apart t I can't possibly plug them both with fingers at the same time.

"If I stop one of them the other will own me sure.

"What shall I do about it?"

He held his thumb against the opening d squatted down upon the floor beneath

At that time the water was four or five hes deep in the tank.

Trim felt through his pockets. There s not even a handkerchief left.

With one hand he quickly undid his e and removed it. Then he pulled off stocking and crowded it as well as he uld into the tube.

If he had had a knife or even a small k he could have pushed the cloth firm- into the tube.

As it was, he could not bring enough sure with his fingers alone to stuff the so tightly that water would not come .

He did succeed however in checking flow considerably and this was better n nothing.

When he had done that he tore away much of the stocking as was not used at that tube and crawled across to the other end of the tank and proceeded to plug the opening there in the same way.

Water still dripped from both tubes, but it was coming in much more slowly than before and this gave him his one chance of escape.

He tried again to raise the cover but it held fast.

He got upon his feet with his back against the top and exerted all the strength of his powerful young muscles to break the cover.

It was evidently made of iron and fastened by metal hasps or something equally strong.

He might as well have tried to push over a house.

Exhausted at last by his efforts he sat down in the water and thought it over.

"This is what became of young Brewer," he said to himself bitterly; "put to sleep by that rascal's coffee, he was taken to this tank and allowed to drown; then his body was stripped, other clothing put on and thrown into the river which is not far away.

"Probably I haven't been here very long. That means that it is night and as Warren's flat is on the top floor this tank is probably on the roof.

"That means that there is no probability that anybody will come up to this roof for more than twelve hours.

"Before that time has passed enough water will have dripped through those tubes to fill the tank and I shall be a goner. There's one thing about it, I can keep my nose above the surface of the water until the last minute and as long as there is life there is hope."

This was a very philosophical way of looking at it, but Trim could not deny that the hope was a very small article.

As he paused and the cloth plugs became more and more soaked they allowed more water to drip through; besides that the pressure of water in the pipes was constantly forcing the plugs out.

Trim did his best to keep the plugs in place by going from one to the other and crowding the cloth in. Thus he prevented the tank from filling rapidly.

He was conscious as the moments dragged by that the water was growing deeper and deeper.

Sometimes it seemed as if the minutes were fearfully long and again it seemed as if they fairly flew past for with every minute more water came into the tank and thus his hope for escape gradually vanished.

It really began to seem as if his end had come when suddenly he thought he heard a step upon the roof outside. Then a new hope suddenly came to him.

"Of course," he reflected, "I ought to have thought of that before.

"They will come up to open the tank before the night has passed and take me out.

"I shall be all right if I can only keep the water from getting deep enough to drown me before they arrive."

He listened sharply and was quite certain that he heard approaching footsteps.

They paused close to him.

Trim reached up and drew out one of the plugs. Immediately the trinkling of falling water was heard again.

The tank was filling more rapidly but Trim knew that the listener outside hearing the falling water would think that everything was working as it should.

"If you'd only open the cover now and look in to see how matters were going," thought Trim.

The person outside was evidently satisfied that the tank was doing its terrible business all right for the footsteps retreated.

Trim broke into a cold sweat.

"What if that should be the janitor of the building," he thought, "or some other innocent person who might help me."

He was tempted to call out but he reflected that if he did so and Warren should hear him he would then be left to drown to a certainty.

"I've got to take the frightful chance," he thought, "that they will come back again."

He replugged the opening and again sat down in the water to wait.

A long time passed.

The water had come so high that, as he sat there it was up to his shoulders.

As nearly as he could calculate it would not take more than an hour more to fill the tank clear to the top.

He heard footsteps approaching, and this time he did not remove the plugs from the tube.

"If they don't hear the sound of falling water," he thought, "they will believe that the tank is full and open it."

This was indeed what happened.

The footsteps drew near and the man outside apparently stood still for a moment listening. Then there was the sound of keys turning in locks.

After that there was a creaking and the lid of the tank was raised a few inches.

Trim might have feigned death, but he dared not take the chance that the lid might be let down again and locked upon him, so he suddenly rose to his feet, throwing the lid clear open, and leaped out of the tank.

It was nearly morning and light enough for him to see clearly.

With a gasp of fright, Frank Beck leaped away from the edge of the tank and started across the roof on a dead run.

Trim was after him with all speed.

Beck started for the stairway that led down to the flats below, but seeing that Trim was close upon him, he gave that up and ran to a point where the roof was but one story higher than that of the adjoining building.

He evidently intended to let himself over the edge and drop to the roof below.

If he had taken the risk of jumping he might have escaped, but he dared not do that.

Instead he knelt in order to get his hands on the roof edge.

Trim came up against him with such force that Beck lost his balance and pitched off head foremost over the roof.

Trim caught him by the heel and held on with all his might.

As he did so he heard the click of a latch behind him and he saw Warren fast disappearing in the doorway of the stairs that led down to the flats.

Trim worked then with the strength of a giant.

He pulled Beck back to the roof and in an instant knocked him senseless by a blow from his fist upon the forehead.

He ran to the clothes lines that were strung up upon the roof, pulled one from its fastenings and quickly bound Beck's

arms to his sides, and fastened his legs so that he could not stir.

Next Trim ran to the door leading to the flats.

It was locked and barred from inside so that after a single trial he saw that it could not be battered down.

Another thought occurred to him.

He remembered that the janitor of the building had testified that young Brewer went out about an hour after his arrival there.

"I see the whole thing," Trim reflected quickly.

"Beck was the man who went out and made the janitor believe that it was Brewer.

"That means that Beck must have come to Warren's flat without coming through the main entrance.

"He could have got here by climbing up from the roof of the adjoining building, then he could have put on Brewer's clothes and walked out.

"Probably this very night Beck has done this same thing, walking out made up as old Bascum."

While these thoughts were running through his head, Trim ran to that part of the roof from which Beck had tried to escape.

He was not surprised to find that on the roof below there was a board leaned up against the wall which would have made it easy for a man to climb up.

Trim let himself over the edge to the roof of the next building, found the door to the flats below, opened it and went down the several stairways as fast as he could.

He got to the street and then turned quickly into the hallway of the building in which Warren lived.

There, coming rapidly down the stairs he encountered Warren himself.

The bookmaker, when he saw Beck struggling in the hands of the man who was supposed to be drowned in the tank, had tried to make his escape, but had made the mistake of stopping in his flat long enough to get Bascum's purse.

Trim had a short sharp struggle with him, but had no difficulty in overpowering the fellow.

The racket awaked the janitor who came up and took charge of Warren while Trim went on upstairs to arrest the woman.

Mrs. Warren was found preparing to follow her husband.

She made no resistance to arrest and after binding her and her husband with a cord that the janitor supplied, Trim handed them over to a passing policeman and went back himself to the roof to get Beck.

The latter had but half recovered from the blow Trim gave him, but he was able to walk, and so before sunrise the three prisoners were behind the bars.

Trim's secret mission was accomplished, for the evidence against the three prisoners was so complete that there was no doubt that a jury would convict them of having caused the death of Charles Brewer.

Trim's experience in the tank was not the only one in which detective work brought him unexpectedly into the water.

Shortly after this affair was wound up, he became concerned in a great case which is described in "Trim's Cold Bath; or, Trapping a Criminal in the Bay," No. 19 New Nick Carter Library.

[THE END.]

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